

MINUTES
MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018; 6:30 P.M.

MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Ashley Brady	Councilman Michael Baker
Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt	Councilman Joseph Frazier
Councilman Ralph Atkinson	Councilwoman Tassie Lewis
Councilman Ronald Atkinson	

STAFF PRESENT:

Alan Ammons, City Administrator	James Brogdon, City Attorney
Lakesha Shannon, City Clerk	Dwayne Tennie, Police Chief
Patricia Brown, City Treasurer	

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Ashley Brady called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. He encouraged citizens to come out to the monthly council meeting.

2. PRAYER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pastor Denley Caughman gave the opening prayer, and Mr. Alan Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. WELCOME CITIZENS, GUESTS & PRESS

Mayor Brady welcomed citizens, guests, and the press (Hometown TV 8).

4. APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 9, 2018 & SPECIAL MEETING JANUARY 25, 2018

A motion was made by Councilman Joseph Frazier, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on

January 9, 2018, and the Special Meeting held on January 25, 2018. The motion passed unanimously.

5. JANUARY EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Mr. Glenn Bridges, with the City of Marion Public Works Department was named the *January Employee of the Month*. Mayor Brady stated that Mr. Bridges does a fantastic job for the City of Marion.

6. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

A. Employee Grievance Committee

Mayor Brady stated that Council needs to fill two unexpired terms on the Employee Grievance Committee. *A motion was made by Councilman Michael Baker, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to appoint Mr. Glenn Bridges and Mr. Randy Brown to the Employee Grievance Committee to complete a 3-year unexpired term. The motion passed unanimously.*

B. Risk Management Safety Committee

Mayor Brady stated that Council needs to fill two unexpired terms on the Risk Management Safety Committee. *A motion was made by Councilman Joseph Frazier, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker, to appoint Mr. Glenn Bridges and Assistant Fire Chief Jackie Yates to the Risk Management Safety Committee to complete a 4-year unexpired term. The motion passed unanimously.*

7. SET DATE FOR CITY PARTY

Mayor Brady stated that Council needs to schedule a date for the Annual City Employee Party. He recommended Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 7:00 pm at Woodhaven. *A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, seconded*

by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, to schedule the Annual City Party for March 20, 2018 at 7:00 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

8. RESOLUTION 2018-01 – MARION HIKE AND BIKE PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Mayor Brady stated that the City is proposing to extend the Marion Hike and Bike Trail from the Marion Depot out to Metal Road. A resolution of support from City Council is needed to apply for grant funding for this project. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier, to approve Resolution 2018-01 Marion Hike and Bike Pedestrian Plan. The motion passed unanimously.***

9. LAW ENFORCEMENT MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

Mayor Brady explained that the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement allows the City police officers to partner with the Marion Sheriff Department and Mullins, Sellers and Nichols Police Departments when additional law enforcement assistance is needed. ***A motion was made by Councilman Joseph Frazier, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker, to approve the renewal Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement. The motion passed unanimously.***

10. RECREATION DEPARTMENT PROPOSAL

Mayor Brady explained a proposal presented by Recreation Director, Kim Elliott. Mrs. Elliott is requesting that the recreation department office be relocated from the Shannon Wilkerson Gym back to the Watsonia Recreation Center, as it is more conducive for a business atmosphere and more cost efficient. The proposal also included a request to create an after school tutoring program from 3–5 pm at Watsonia and Grice's beginning next school year. Mrs. Elliott also requested that a fee schedule be created for adult basketball play at the Shannon Wilkerson

Gym to help offset some of the cost to maintain the building. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to relocate the recreation office back to Watsonia, and to allow the Mayor, City Administrator and Recreation Director to create a fee schedule for adult basketball play at the Shannon Wilkerson Gym.*** Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt and Councilman Michael Baker expressed their concerns with charging a fee for the adult basketball play. Mayor Pro-tem Hunt discussed the alternative of having a supervised night time play schedule instead of charging the fee. Councilman Baker asked that the fee schedule item be excluded from the motion to allow time for further research and discussion. ***Councilman Ralph Atkinson amended his motion, seconded Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to allow Mayor Pro-tem Hunt and Councilman Baker to meet with the Mayor, City Administrator and Recreation Director to create a proposed fee schedule for adult basketball play. The motion passed unanimously.***

11. DRAINAGE BIDS

Mayor Brady stated that bids have been received to repair drainage issues on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd and Dozier Street. He stated that Herrington Construction was awarded the bid for these projects. Mr. Ammons stated that these projects are funded with CTC funds. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to accept the bid from Herrington Construction as presented at \$28,000 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd and \$15,000 for Dozier Street. The motion passed unanimously.***

12. APPROVE BEAUTIFICATION EQUIPMENT FROM HOSPITALITY TAX CONTINGENCY FUND

Mayor Brady stated that the current budget includes contingency funding for beautification equipment. He explained the need for a spare bush hog and recommended the purchase of a 6 ft. and 10 ft. bush hog to provide more efficiency in maintaining city property's. The projected cost for the 6 ft. bush hog is \$2665.76, and \$5853.53 for the 10 ft. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier, to approve the purchase of a 6 ft. and 10 ft. bush hog. The motion passed unanimously.***

13. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

A. Truck Route

Mr. Ammons stated that Council previously discussed implementing a truck route to prohibit 18-wheeler trucks from driving through town; however, there were several concerns at that time. He proposed that Council consider a truck route from Liberty Street to Jones Avenue that would prohibit the trucks from driving through the downtown area of Main Street, with the exception of deliveries. He stated that there have been issues with the trucks breaking up sidewalks and knocking down street signs as they drive through. Mr. Ammons noted that restricted truck routes are common in many municipalities. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt, to approve the proposed truck route as presented. The motion passed unanimously.*** Mr. Ammons stated that he will present a written plan to SCDOT regarding this proposal.

B. Bi-Weekly Payroll

Mr. Ammons stated that he and City Treasurer Patricia Brown did some research on bi-weekly payroll and determined that it would be a direct cost savings of about \$5,000 per year, and an indirect cost savings of 8-10 hours per week in staff time. He stated that they will gather some additional figures and present to Council

for consideration. Mr. Ammons stated that he met with some of the city departments to receive input on this proposal, and several of employees not in favor of the change. Councilmembers Ronald Atkinson and Michael Baker expressed their concerns of any hardship this may place on employees. Mr. Ammons stated that he will continue to research this proposal and talk to additional employees. Mr. Ammons stated that 70% of employees currently receive their pay by direct deposit. He spoke with the employees who do not have direct deposit and only a few were not in favor of it. He is proposing that mandatory direct deposit be implemented by July 1, 2018, and all new hires prior to that date be required to have direct deposit. Mayor Brady stated that two local banks have agreed to open checking accounts for employees who currently do not have one, and provide them with a debit card. The only requirement is that the employee maintain a \$1 balance in the account. Councilman Baker stated that it may help if employees are educated on the benefits of direct deposit. ***Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded Councilman Michael Baker, to approve the recommendation of direct deposit for all new hires, and that the entire staff be converted to direct deposit by July 1, 2018. The motion passed unanimously.***

C. Miscellaneous

Mr. Ammons stated that the driveway repairs were postponed by Herrington Construction due to the weather; however, work has now resumed on Withlacoochee Avenue and will continue onto Euclid Street and Northside Avenue.

14. CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

Attorney James Brogdon had no update.

15. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Brady stated that Departmental Reports were included in the Council packets for review.

16. DISTRICT AND CITY UPDATES FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Mayor Brady stated that City is in the process of updating its website to make it more user friendly for citizens to obtain information. Headshots of City Council will be included on the website. He noted that the web designer is a local from Mullins. Mayor Brady reported that the Public Works Department have been cleaning and edging overgrown sidewalks all over town. He also announced upcoming events which include: The Multiple Sclerosis Walk sponsored by the Marion County Sheriff's Department, the Leprechaun Leap, and the Marion Runfest. Mayor Brady noted how efficient the Public Works Department has become since the departments were combined, and they are now able to work on various projects as needed. He stated that the department has worked hard to prepare the city for these upcoming events, and commented that the guys enjoy working on different things. He also noted that Mr. Randy Brown with Building Maintenance has painted the Hike and Bike Trail sign, which was a cost savings of \$600 for the City. Mayor Brady reported that Grand Strand Water and Sewer has cleaned the overgrown vegetation from the Catfish Canal. The bridge on the Hike and Bike Trail will be repaired and painted so that is safe for citizens to cross. Mayor Brady stated that the pipe is onsite for the water line repairs on Marshall Street, and staff will begin work on this project soon. Mayor Brady stated that the City has a severe litter problem and a part-time staff member has been hired to pick up trash throughout the city. The GPS units are now live in four police cars and the alerts are working very well. Mayor Brady commended the Public Works Department for all the beautification work they have done around town and on the bypass area by Wal-Mart.

Councilman Michael Baker stated that his concerns were addressed with Mr. Ammons prior to the meeting.

Councilman Joseph Frazier thanked Mr. Ammons and Chief Tennie for their work in addressing the nuisance property complaints on Mullins Street and Dunlop Extension. He expressed his concerns with the unoccupied building on North Main Street and the old Coca-Cola building on Manning Street. Councilman Ralph Atkinson agreed that these buildings are an eyesore and complaints have been received from citizens. He stated that the property owner should be required to abide by the city ordinance pertaining to this issue, and it should be addressed. Mr. Ammons stated that the property owner has not obtained a building permit to complete work on the building. He stated that he doesn't believe the City has an ordinance to address this issue, but the property can be declared a nuisance. Mayor Brady asked City Attorney James Brogdon to research this issue and report back to Council next month. Councilman Frazier asked if a letter has been sent to the owner of Thomas Mobile Home Park regarding his plans for the property. Mr. Ammons stated that a letter has been sent out requesting that the owner submit a plan of action to the City.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson requested the status of the building permit for a home that has been under construction in the English Park community for over a year. Mr. Ammons stated that the original contractor stopped work due to irreconcilable differences, and the owner is actively pursuing a new contractor to complete the home. Councilman Ronald Atkinson also commented that there are several street lights out throughout the city. Mayor Brady asked that citizens take a picture of the pole and report the picture and street name to Ms. Ainsley Sanders at City Hall so that Duke Energy can be notified. Councilman Atkinson

commented on the condition of the windows at City Hall and asked that this be addressed.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson had no update.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis also commented on the issue of street lights out around town. She stated that she has reported several to Mr. Ammons, and asked that the citizens work with the City to report street light outages.

Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt had no update.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to go into Executive Session for a Legal Update Regarding the Police Department. The motion passed unanimously.

18. POSSIBLE ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS

Returning from executive session a motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to return to regular session. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Ashley Brady stated that there was no action taken during executive session.

19. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Ashley Brady

City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon
Taped: February 13, 2018